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Richard J. Schrader

Some Backgrounds of Henryson



Henryson studies, which now and then have tended to isolate him as a social reformer, disciple of Chaucer, or precursor of Burns, have in recent years done much to restore him to his rightful place among the most literate of medieval British poets.¹ And Denton Fox's edition of the *Testament of Cresseid* has demonstrated what the rest of Henryson deserves in the way of careful attention to the text and the literary background. The sources and other ancillary material gathered below, not previously noted, are intended as further proof of the poet's erudition and of the variety of genres he drew upon, particularly with regard to the *Morall Fabillis*. The fictive world he populated with evocative animals and troubled human lovers owes much of its richness to imaginative alterations of a heritage far larger than what has often been expected from a "Scottish Chaucerian."

Though an original poet, Henryson consulted his forerunners in Latin, French, and English for elements ranging from diction to plot. Most of the earlier fabulists have been explored for contributions to Henryson's collection, yet few of the scholarly forays through the painful labyrinth of Aesopic and Renardian tradition have been completely successful. For example, MacQueen has assembled evidence for Henryson's familiarity with the *Isopet de Lyon* (thirteenth century), a French

version of an undoubted Henryson source, Gualterus Anglicus; Jamieson, however, warned against hasty ascription to the extant version of this *Isopet* because only one manuscript remains.² But I would add to equivalent material in MacQueen the following identical rhymes of phrases with identical sense in the fable of the Cock and the Jewel: "To get his dennar set was al his cure./Scaipand amang the as, be aventure/He fand ane Jolie Jasp" (ll. 67-69); "Une Jaspe, per aventure,/Ai tro-vee, don n'avoit cure" (ll. 3-4).³ The quest for sources of *The Confession of the Fox* is much more difficult, and one element of Henryson's story is especially intriguing. Lowrence the fox, a descendant of the virtually immortal hero of the *Roman de Renart*, is slain. This event, for which no satisfactory Renardian parallel has been discovered, was doubtless inspired by a story found in Caxton's *Aesop* (1484). (Henryson's debt to Caxton has been claimed for a much longer time than that to the *Isopet de Lyon*, but it too has not gone unchallenged.)⁴ Having eaten a goat, Lowrence lies stroking his belly in the sun's heat and says recklessly, "Upon this wame set were ane bolt full meit" (l. 760). He is skewered at once by the goatherd's arrow, and he laments, "Me think na man may speik ane word in play,/Bot now on dayis in ernist it is tane" (ll. 770-71). Both the action and the theme of justice are similar in Caxton. There, a chastened wolf says, after much attempted wrongdoing and while lying under a tree:

"O Iupyer, I am worthy of gretter punycyon whanne I haue offended in so many maners. Sende thow now to me from thyn hyghe throne a swerd or other wepen, wherwith I maye strongly punyssh and bete me by grete penaunce. For wel worthy I am to receyue a gretter disciplyne." And the good man whiche was vpon the tree herkened alle these wordes & deuyses and sayd no word. And whanne the wulf had fynysshed alle his syghes and complayntes, the good man toke his axe, wherwith he had kytte away the dede braunches fro the tree, and cast it vpon the wulf, and it felle vpon his neck in suche maner that the wulf torned vpsodoun, the feet vpward, and laye as he had ben dede. And whan the wulf myght releue and dresse hym self, he loked and byheld vpward to the heuen and beganne thus to crye, "Ha! Iupiter, I see now wel that thow hast herd and enhaunced my prayer." And thenne he perceyued the man....⁵

Henryson worked with a variety of sources apart from the Aesopic and Renardian. He augmented the traditional associations of the animals in his fables by using scores of proverbs,

or else language meant to suggest well-known sententiae. The cock who preferred food to a jewel, "Richt cant and crous, albeit he was bot pure,/Flew furth upon ane dunghill sone be day" (ll. 65-66). The first line is unique with Henryson for this fable, and he was evidently thinking of the Scots proverb, "A cock is crouse in his own midding," analogous to the familiar "Every cock is proud on his own dunghill."⁶ The hero of *The Preaching of the Swallow* harangues upon the text, "Nam leuius lædit quicquid prævidimus ante" (For whatever we have foreseen ahead harms less grievously) (l. 1754). The editors observe that this line looks like one in Gualterus Anglicus: "Nam prouisa minus ledere tela solent."⁷ But Henryson's words are proverbial, and he has repeated them verbatim from a popular schoolbook, "Cato's" *Distichs*.⁸ (The fable is an elaboration of this theme of "Cato." Henryson may have been giving his students an example of how they could perform this common pedagogical exercise.)⁹ In the *moralitas* of *The Lion and the Mouse*, Henryson says:

Thir rurall men, that stentit hes the Net
 In quhilk the Lyoun suddandlie wes tane,
 Waittit alway amendis for to get
 (For hurt men wrytis in the Marbill Stane).
 (ll. 1608-11)

The striking fourth line is apparently the earliest recorded instance of a proverb better known from Thomas More's *History of King Richard III* (ca. 1513): "For men vse if they haue an euil turne, to write it in marble: & whoso doth vs a good tourne, we write it in duste which is not worst proued by her."¹⁰ Finally, while Henryson's town mouse and country mouse are feasting in the larder they cry, "haill yule, haill!" (l. 289). R. M. Wilson supposes that they are singing a popular song now lost; more probably, Henryson had in mind the Scottish proverb, "It is eith to cry 3ule on ane vder manis coist."¹¹

Henryson introduced a good deal of scientific lore into his *Fabillis*, often in unexpected places. *The Frog and the Mouse* features this unprecedented display of learning:

The Mous beheld unto hir fronsit face,
 Hir runkillit cheikis, and hir lippis syde,
 Hir hingand browis, and hir voce sa hace,
 Hir loggerand leggis, and hir harsky hyde.
 Scho ran abak, and on the Paddok cryde:
 "Giff I can ony skill of Phisnomy,
 Thow hes sumpart off falset and Invy.

"For Clerkis sayis, the Inclinatioun
 Of mannis thocht proceedis commonly
 Efter the Corporall complexioun
 To gude or evill, as Nature will apply:
 Ane thrawart will, ane thrawin Phisnomy.
 The auld Proverb is witnes off this Lorum--
Distortum vultum sequitur distortio morum."
 (ll. 2819-32)¹²

Taking the mouse's argument together with the frog's reply that Nature is to blame, MacQueen lets matters drop with the statement, "This echoes the Platonism of Chartres," and a glance at Alan of Lille's *Anticlaudianus* (p. 120). The other commentators are virtually silent on the ultimate source. When Henryson uses a phrase like "For Clerkis sayis" he usually means that he is quoting or paraphrasing someone--he is more reliable on this score than Chaucer--and the core of the idea is in the philosophical tradition most likely for Henryson, that of Aristotle, whose *Metaphysica* he cites to good purpose in *The Preaching*. Aristotle judges character by facial features in *Historia Animalium* (I, 8-9 [491^b]); and in *Physiognomonica* he says: "An ill-proportioned body indicates a rogue.... But, if bad proportions mean villainy, a well-proportioned frame must be characteristic of upright men and brave" (6 [814^a]).¹³ He also says, "The *Sly* man is fat about the face, with wrinkles round his eyes, and he wears a drowsy expression" (3[808^a]); and "...swollen inflated sides signify aimless loquacity, as in frogs" (6[810^b]). Several other characteristics of Henryson's frog correspond to Aristotle's evidence of badness. John Metham, in a physiognomical work of around 1450, perpetuates Aristotle and lists many traits that reinforce the mouse's judgement.¹⁴ For example, the frog's brows mark her as "enuyus" and "froward;" her voice is a sign of "foltyschnes." The mouse, in the manner of the ignorant birds of *The Preaching*, reduces her argument to the proverb in line 2832, as if the currency of the thought gives it validity. That the notion was a commonplace by this time can be seen in Dunbar's assumption preceding a caricature of Walter Kennedy: "...thy frawart phisnomy/Dois manifest thy malice to all men."¹⁵ The frog begins her own broadside of proverbs by making this qualification: "'Na' (quod the Taid), 'that Proverb is not trew;/ For fair thingis oftymis ar fundin faikin'" (ll. 2833-34). As support, she calls upon higher Authority: "Thairfoir I find this Scripture in all place:/Thow suld not Juge ane man efter his face" (ll. 2838-39). The Bannatyne reading, "Thairfoir I fynd in scriptor in a place," is verified by John 7:24:

"Judge not according to the appearance [*faciem*], but judge just judgment."¹⁶ But the Bible-quoting paddok goes on to say that even were she "als fair as Jolie Absolon" (l. 2842)¹⁷ she could not be held accountable for her appearance. The mouse does not see behind this unfortunate reference, and, after the frog makes the allusion to Nature, she ends the quarrel: "'Let be thy preiching' (quod the hungrie Mous)" (l. 2851).

The same kind of learning underlies Lowrence the fox's description of Friar Wolf Waitskaith, D.D., his confessor (*The Confession of the Fox*):

Your bair feit, and your Russet Coull off gray,
Your lene cheik, your pail pietious face,
Schawis to me your perfite halines.
(ll. 679-81)

The fox might well have learned from his own appearance that the wolf is not holy. He later says of himself, when refusing a just penance for his transgressions:

consider my Complexioun,
Selie and waik, and off my Nature tender;
Lo, will ye se, I am baith lene and sklender.
(ll. 716-18)

Lowrence means that he is hungry, but his "complexion" is that of the choleric, who "hath nature of fire, hot and dry, naturally is *lean and slender*, covetous, ireful, hasty, brainless, foolish, malicious, deceitful, and subtle where he applieth his wit...and commonly he loveth to be clad in black, as *russet and grey*."¹⁸ The lean and pale face of the wolf does not bode well for the fox, nor is it merely "a nice additional touch" (MacQueen, p. 147). Since Henryson uses human terms to describe animal features, I think that one might reasonably apply physiognomical lore, and thus recognize what the fox does not, that these features betray a character as deceitful as his own.¹⁹

Another branch of science is represented by the astronomical configuration reported to Henryson by Lowrence (ll. 635-41). The planets' positions are unfavorable for the fox, leading him to seek out a confessor. MacQueen has shown how the arrangement ingeniously foreshadows Lowrence's fate at the hands of the goatherd (p. 146). And it reinforces this symbolic reading to know that the configuration is so extremely rare that Henryson must have constructed it with no intention of referring to an actual date--certainly no date in his presumed lifetime or in a considerable period before that.²⁰ The stanza

might be a parody of the similarly elaborate dating machinery in Lydgate and others, but it is mainly a catalogue, a display of learning, chosen for its thematic appropriateness.²¹

In other respects, Henryson the schoolmaster shows signs of the books he doubtless learned and taught from. The classics are echoed,²² and Augustine is part of the long tradition behind the famous lines of *Robene and Makyne*: "The man that will nocht quhen he may/sall haif nocht quhen he wald" (ll. 91-92). Aside from its lengthy history as an English proverb, the thought is found in the appropriate context of how the first disobedience has led to all other disobedience (*The City of God*): "...ut, quoniam noluit quod potuit, quod non potest velit."²³ Some words from Boethius are uttered by the preaching swallow:

For Clerkis sayis it is nocht sufficient
To consider that is befor thyne Ee;
Bot prudence is ane inwart Argument,
That garris ane man proude and foirse
Quhat gude, quhat evill is liklie ffor to be,
Off everilk thing behald the fynall end,
And swa ffra perrell the better him defend.
(ll. 1755-61)

Neque enim quod ante oculos situm est suffecerit
intueri, rerum exitus prudentia metitur....[it is not
enough to see what is present before our eyes; prudence demands that we look to the future.]²⁴

The poet's study of rhetoric accounts for a marvelous scene in *The Lion and the Mouse*. Henryson goes far beyond the traditional story-elements.²⁵ He emphasizes and makes more credible the offense of the mice by having them cavort upon the noble personage, instead of sending only one of them over him. The chief mouse is seized, and though terrified she, unlike her counterpart in *Gaulterus*, pleads her own case. And it is in good order. In fact, its vividness and authenticity stem from Henryson's attention to the rhetorical and dramatic possibilities of the situation. The act is admitted (ll. 1423-25), and the defense must draw upon extraneous matter to save its case; hence the mouse proceeds, in selective fashion, according to the rules for an "Assumptive Juridical Issue."²⁶ The Acknowledgement includes both Exculpation on the acceptable grounds of ignorance (ll. 1431-32) and several Pleas for Mercy, including: "Quhen Rigour sittis in the Tribunall,/The equitie off Law quha may sustene?" (ll. 1472-73). A second approach, Rejection of the Responsibility, is grounded on Circumstance:

"The sweit sesoun provokit us to dance" (l. 1442). After some personal appeals to her judge, she concludes the way only a few Aesopic mice have done in this situation--by promising future aid to the lion if necessary--and this time the supplicant has capped the argument with an approved ground for pardon: an offender may be let off "if there is any hope that he will be of service in the event that he departs unpunished."²⁷ Later, to no one's surprise but the lion's, she is true to her word.

Analogues sometimes clarify Henryson's intentions; sometimes they do no more than clarify the issues involved in a difficult passage. One such crux is his claim to have made the "translation" of his fables

Nocht of my self, for vane presumptioun,
Bot be requeist and precept of ane Lord,
Of quhome the Name it neidis not record.
(ll. 33-35)

Given the fundamental seriousness of purpose which characterizes medieval fables until Poggio Bracciolini, and given the fabulists' habit of justifying their art on the basis of Biblical precedent, it seems to me more likely that Henryson refers to the Lord of Parables, Douglas' "prynce of poetis," than to a contemporary ruler.²⁸ To seek a Scottish lord is as fruitless as the long quest for a uniform reading of Spenser's political allegory, one of the darker chapters in scholarship. Elliott comments, "Such vague reference seems poor reward for patronage. Henryson is probably attempting to establish an initial attitude of objectivity rather than acknowledging a patron."²⁹ I find more to the lines than the "affected modesty" topos, and a man so aware of tradition might even have thought to imitate the "Romulus" whose prose reworking of Phaedrus, in the tenth century or before, was the basis of most subsequent collections: he was often taken for an Emperor.³⁰ I could also suggest Alfred the Great, on whom Marie de France fathered her fables (Epilogue, ll. 11-19); and who, in language like Henryson's, was credited as late as 1502 with translating Romulus into English: "Deinde rex anglie Afferus [sic]: in anglicam linguam eum transferri precepit."³¹ But as Crowne has shown, Henryson nowhere mentions Romulus (or Alfred, I will add), and his peculiar conception of Aesop himself as a Roman (ll. 1370-73) has more in common with the Lydgatian than with the usual Romulean prologues of earlier collections.³² In any event, that Henryson felt the touch of divine sanction in his sources is manifest from his canonization of Aesop. In the dream-vision prefacing *The Lion and the Mouse*, Aesop says,

"And now my winning is in Hevin ffor ay" (l. 1374).³³

The analogues to be found in Rosemond Tuve's distinguished study of later medieval allegorists have far greater significance for Henryson scholarship. Her work has unfortunately not been brought to bear upon the Scottish poet, and she herself ignores him. But these writers observed a distinction important for the allegorical aspects of the *Fabillis*: it did not matter where the allegorical parallel was found, regardless how "far-fetched" the analogy; what mattered was "whether a metaphorically understood relation is used to take off into areas where a similitude can point to valuable human action, or to matters of spiritual import." The former is moral allegory (*quid agas*), the latter strict allegory (*quid credas*).³⁴ In Henryson, the *moralitas* is nearly always concerned with *quid agas*, and often it is notorious for seeming far-fetched. But a more definitive term for Henryson's method might be what Tuve calls imposed allegory; she even speculates about "a little pocket of late fifteenth-century taste that enjoyed this peculiarly strenuous kind of allegorical reading..." (p. 237). However, it would appear that such handling of the text has its roots in Scriptural exegesis,³⁵ and the fourteenth-century *Gesta Romanorum* will often similarly bend a story out of shape for a moral.

Among examples from the fifteenth century, Tuve cites Jean Molinet's *Romant de la rose moralisé cler et net* (ca. 1482), with its many "dodges and shifts" to moralize a character like Faux Semblant, or to make Jupiter good on one page and bad on another (pp. 237-38). (One is reminded of the treatment of Alexander in the *Gesta*). In a similar manner and at the same time, Colard Mansion wove moralizations *into* Ovid, as opposed to the practice of earlier writers like Pierre Bersuire, who in his *Ovide moralisé* did not attempt to supplant Ovid but to comment on him--once more Tuve speculates that around 1500 there was a brief "little pocket of taste" which asked for "'profitable' ingenuities and equations" (pp. 311-13). It is a comment more upon us than upon the late Middle Ages that, as Kinsley says, Henryson's "moral applications...are often too ingenious for modern taste...."³⁶

The problem that all of this poses for Henryson criticism is the extent to which he was guided by the various traditions of imposed allegory. The long-standing cultural commerce between France and Scotland makes it possible that he was acquainted with Tuve's "pocket of taste" (and with the *Isopets* and the *Roman de Renart* as well);³⁷ yet the British tradition might just as likely account for his type of moralizing. Lydgate too makes odd one-to-one relationships between the animals of his fables and abstractions in his morals. But the analogy

stops there: the morals are not as elaborate as Henryson's; rather, Lydgate most often amplifies *within* the story to point out moral lessons--so much so, that the reader sometimes forgets where he is. Hence Lydgate, while still clinging to the tradition of tale and moral in tandem, has much in common with the allegorizers who overhauled Ovid and the *Roman de la Rose*. Henryson, to the contrary, only infrequently preaches within a tale. He prefers to tell the reader a good story salted with all manner of wisdom and then to extend its significance in the *moralitas*. The story is seldom devoid of some kind of explicit *sentence*, in addition to what is implied, but this message will usually be less hortatory than prefatory: it will often forge a tenuous link with the moral.³⁸ No critical problem in Henryson is more important than the relationship of his tales to their *moralitates*, and Tuve's book is a necessary adjunct to the several fine essays on that problem in recent years.³⁹ Perhaps it will not be completely solved until our knowledge of the sources and analogues, the proverbial folk-wisdom and ancient science, all the curriculum authors drawn upon with such facility, matches Henryson's own.

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NOTES

¹ Especially the work of Ian Jamieson, beginning with "The Poetry of Robert Henryson: A Study of the Use of Source Material," Diss. Edinburgh 1964; also John MacQueen, *Robert Henryson: A Study of the Major Narrative Poems* (Oxford, 1967). Not recent but still useful is Arthur R. Diebler, *Henrison's Fabeldichtungen*, Diss. Leipzig (Halle a. S., 1885). I would like to thank Professor Charles L. Regan for his helpful comments.

² MacQueen, *Henryson*, app. II; Jamieson, "Source Material," p. 19.

³ Except for the *Testament of Cresseid*, ed. Denton Fox (London and Edinburgh, 1968), the text for Henryson is his *Poems and Fables*, ed. H. Harvey Wood, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh and London, 1958). The lines from the *Isopet* are quoted from Julia Bastin, ed., *Recueil général des Isopets, Société des Anciens Textes Français*, II (Paris, 1930), 86.

⁴ Denton Fox, "Henryson and Caxton." *Journal of English and German Philology*, 67 (1968), 586-93.

⁵ *Caxton's Aesop*, ed. R. T. Lenaghan (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 152-53 (my punctuation). The original (*Fabulae Extravagantes* XXXVI) is even better: e.g., "O God, how well prayers are heard in this sacred place!" The text appears in Léopold Hervieux, ed., *Les Fabulistes latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen âge*, 2nd edn. (1893-99; rpt. New York, n.d.), II, 284-86. It is translated in *Babrius and Phaedrus*, ed. Ben E. Perry (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1965), pp. 593-95.

⁶ Cf. *Fergusson's Scottish Proverbs*, ed. Erskine Beveridge, STS, 2nd ser., 15 (Edinburgh and London, 1924), no. 75 (72); *The James Carmichael Collection of Proverbs in Scots*, ed. M. L. Anderson (Edinburgh, 1957), no. 37. Compare Bartlett J. Whiting, *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings Mainly Before 1500* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), item C350; MacQueen, *Henryson*, p. 107. Donald MacDonald has dealt with "Chaucer's Influence on Henryson's *Fables*: The Use of Proverbs and Sententiae," *Medium Ævum*, 39 (1970), 21-7.

⁷ Gualterus XX, 10, in Hervieux, *Fabulistes latins*, II, 325.

⁸ Henryson translates the line from Gualterus in ll. 1738-40 (Whiting, *Proverbs*, D18). For l. 1754 see Hans Walther, ed., *Proverbia Sententiaequae Latinitatis Medii Aevi*, 6 vols. (Göttingen, 1963-69), item 15841c; and the *Distichs*, II, 24, 2. Cf. Whiting M111, W49. Even the one line quoted verbatim from Gualterus, in the general Prologue (l. 28)--"Dulcius arident seriapicta locis" (Prol. 2; Hervieux, *Fabulistes latins*, II, 316)--is not by itself conclusive evidence that Henryson knew Gualterus, for it may have become proverbial. See Walther 6400. However, Henryson does cite "Esop" as his source, and other evidence is abundant. (Subsequent to the submission of this article, I have found that the parallel in the *Distichs* has been noticed by J. A. Burrow, "Henryson: *The Preaching of the Swallow*," *Essays in Criticism*, 25 (1975), 34.)

⁹ Cf. R. T. Lenaghan, "The Nun's Priest's Fable," *PMLA*, 78 (1963), 302; Derek Pearsall, *John Lydgate* (London, 1970), p. 206.

¹⁰ On Jane Shore, in *The Complete Works*, II: *The History of King Richard III*, ed. Richard S. Sylvester (New Haven and Lon-

don, 1963), p. 57. Cf. Whiting, *Proverbs*, T531, which does not list Henryson's line.

¹¹ R. M. Wilson, *The Lost Literature of Medieval England*, 2nd edn. (London, 1972), p. 185; B. J. Whiting, "Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings from Scottish Writings Before 1600," *Medieval Studies*, 13 (1951), 164; Whiting, *Proverbs*, Y39.

¹² The Latin proverb is "A distortion of morals follows from a distorted face;" see Walther, *Proverbia*, 6026. For l. 2830 see Whiting, *Proverbs*, W265.

¹³ *Opuscula*, trans. T. Loveday et al. (Oxford, 1913). On Henryson's familiarity with Aristotle see Marshall W. Stearns, *Robert Henryson* (New York, 1949), pp. 98-150; MacQueen, *Henryson*, pp. 18-19, 158.

¹⁴ Metham's *Works*, ed. Hardin Craig, EETS, O.S. 132 (London, 1916), pp. 123-42. To see how much of this had become common lore, compare *The Kalendar & Compost of Shepherds* [1493; English trans. ca. 1518], ed. G. C. Heseltine (London, 1930), pp. 150-55. Jamieson cites other literary uses of this science ("Source Material," pp. 65-66).

¹⁵ "The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie," ll. 81-82, in *The Poems of William Dunbar*, ed. W. Mackay Mackenzie, rev. edn. (London, 1960); Whiting, *Proverbs*, W265.

¹⁶ "For fair thingis...": Whiting, *Proverbs*, T119. "Thow suld not Juge...": Whiting M167. "Judge not...": cited by Jamieson, "Source Material," p. 67; cf. Whiting Fl. The Bannatyne text of the *Fabillis*, which sometimes differs significantly from the Bassandyne print (1571) used in Wood's edition, may be found in *The Bannatyne Manuscript*, ed. W. Tod Ritchie, vol. IV, STS, 2nd ser., 26 (Edinburgh and London, 1930).

¹⁷ 2 Kings 14:25; Whiting, *Proverbs*, A18.

¹⁸ *Kalendar*, p. 151 (italics mine). The color of the wolf's cowl is perhaps meant to signify that he is more than a Franciscan. Also, compare Chaucer's Reeve, "A sclendre colerik man." Other examples of these commonplaces may be seen in two complexion poems in Rossell H. Robbins, ed., *Secular Lyrics of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1955), nos. 76, 77.

¹⁹ "A little short visage of yellow colour signifieth a person deceiving, untrue, malicious, and full of harm. A visage long and fair signifieth a man hot, disloyal, spiteful, and full of ire and cruelty" (*Kalendar*, p. 153). Compare Aristotle's *Physiognomonica*, 3 (807^b) and 6 (812^a), where paleness denotes cowardice. Lowrence's son is given similar treatment in ll. 971-77.

²⁰ I have consulted William D. Stahlman and Owen Gingerich, *Solar and Planetary Longitudes for Years -2500 to +2500 by 10-Day Intervals* (Madison, Wisc., 1963). That Henryson was not above rearranging the heavens for symbolic purposes is shown by Fox's note to ll. 11-14 of *The Testament of Cresseid*.

²¹ Cf. Lydgate's *The Title and Pedigree of Henry VI*, ll. 289 ff., in his *Minor Poems*, ed. Henry N. MacCracken, II, EETS, O.S. 192 (London, 1934), pp. 621-22. See also Pearsall, *Lydgate*, p. 126. Jamieson's discussion of the "technical and forbidding" stanzas on the music of the spheres in Henryson's *Orpheus and Eurydice* (ll. 219-39) is also relevant: "'To Preue Thare Preching be a Poesye': Some Thoughts on Henryson's Poetics," *Parergon*, no. 8 (1974), 35.

²² Distantly, in most cases. In the *Fabillis*, ll. 707-11, there is possibly an ironic memory of Juvenal, *Satire* III, 41-44. A simile in Statius, *Thebaid* IV, 363-68, may account for the vivid detail in *Fabillis*, ll. 1084-86. Something like Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VII, 745-46, underlies *Testament of Cresseid*, ll. 586-88.

²³ Whiting, *Proverbs*, W275; *De Civitate Dei* 14.15, ed. B. Dombart and A. Kalb, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 48 (Turnhout, 1955).

²⁴ *Philosophiae Consolatio* II, pr. 1, 15, ed. L. Bieler, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 94 (Turnhout, 1957); trans. Richard Green (Indianapolis, etc., 1962). Editors have not pointed out that a stanza from this fable (ll. 1860-66) also appears in the *Bannatyne Manuscript*, vol. II, STS, 2nd ser., 22 (Edinburgh and London, 1928), p. 190, separate from the *Fabillis* and as a complete poem, with some major variations.

²⁵ Jamieson ("Source Material," pp. 122-27) discusses many of the alterations.

²⁶ A process described in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. and trans. Harry Caplan (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1954), I, xiv, 24-xv, 25; II, xiv, 21-xvii, 26; and in greater detail in Cicero, *De Inventione*, II, xxiv, 72-xxxix, 115.

²⁷ *Rhet. ad Her.* II, xvii, 25, trans. Caplan; cf. *De Inv.* II, xxxv, 106.

²⁸ Gavin Douglas, *Virgil's Aeneid Translated into Scottish Verse*, ed. David F. C. Coldwell, vol. II, STS, 3rd ser., 25 (Edinburgh and London, 1957), Prol. to I, 452. However, when Douglas claims to write "At the request of a lord of renown" (l. 83) he means Lord Henry Sinclair, and he names him. A crux similar to that in Henryson appears in Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale* (VII, 3444-46). Cf. *The Court of Sapience*, ed. Robert Spindler, *Beiträge zur englischen Philologie* 6 (Leipzig, 1927), ll. 65-66. When Lydgate refers to his lord in connection with some translation in the *Fall of Princes*, II, 1006-08 (ed. Henry Bergen, EETS, E.S. 121 [London, 1920]), it is to his patron, Duke Humphrey of Gloucester. Paralleling Henryson's language, Lydgate claims that he was moved to write *The Title and Pedigree of Henry VI* "By precept first and commaundement" of Lord Warwick (l. 12): *Minor Poems*, II, 614. The device is obviously the "affected modesty" topos in Willem's thirteenth-century *Van den Vos Reinaerde*: "I would not presume to make/A poem but for the request/Of one accustomed to invest/All that she does with courtesy": "The Story of Reynard the Fox," trans. Adriaan J. Barnouw, in *Reynard the Fox and Other Mediaeval Netherlands Secular Literature*, ed. E. Colledge (Leyden, 1967), pp. 55-56. See Jamieson ("Source Material," pp. 34-35), who calls upon Curtius and mentions the nobleman in the Prologue (ll. 30-37) to Marie de France's *Fables*, ed. A. Ewert and R. C. Johnston (Oxford, 1942). Perhaps Henryson is joking about his lack of patronage.

²⁹ Henryson's *Poems*, ed. Charles Elliott (Oxford, 1963), p. 131. Cf. Jamieson, "Henryson's Poetics," p. 29.

³⁰ E.g., in the Prologue to Marie's fables (ll. 12-16); cf. *Caxton's Aesop*, p. 74. See Jamieson, "Source Material," pp. 8-9.

³¹ *Esopus cum Commento Optimo et Morali* (London: Richard Pynson, 1502; microfilm: STC no. 168), sig. Aii^r.

³² David K. Crowne, "A Date for the Composition of Henryson's *Fables*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 61 (1962), 587-88.

³³ Two passages in *The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman* have analogues that deserve a note. The three principals engage in a peculiar ceremony when they agree to abide by Lawrence's decision on the question of an oath's validity: "The Wolff braid furth his fute, the man his hand,/And on the Toddiss Taill sworne thay ar to stand" (ll. 2313-14). This is evidently a parody of the "body oath," for which see *The Thre Prestis of Peblis*, ed. T. D. Robb, STS, 2nd ser., 8 (Edinburgh and London, 1920), p. 83, n. 950. Later in Henryson's fable, as the gullible wolf descends a well in one bucket, the fox rises in the other and says to his harried companion, "thus fairis it off Fortoun:/As ane cummis up, scho quheillis ane uther doun!" (ll. 2418-19). This taunt occurs in Caxton's *The History of Reynard the Fox*, ed. N. F. Blake, EETS, O.S. 263 (Oxford, 1970), p. 91, and his *Aesop*, p. 207. Cf. Whiting, *Proverbs*, F506, W665. It also occurs as late as "Old Mr. Rabbit, He's a Good Fisherman," in *Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings*.

³⁴ Rosemund Tuve, *Allegorical Imagery: Some Mediaeval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton, 1966), pp. 13, 15.

³⁵ See G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1961), p. 66.

³⁶ James Kinsley, ed., *Scottish Poetry, A Critical Survey* (London, 1955), p. 18.

³⁷ In 1498, Don Pedro de Ayala wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella, "There is a good deal of French education in Scotland, and many speak the French language": John Strong, *A History of Secondary Education in Scotland* (Oxford, 1909), p. 46. MacQueen observes that Henryson may have studied abroad (*Henryson*, p. 17).

³⁸ Some critics, like Stearns, would emphasize the gap between story and moral by asserting that most of the "moral sentence" is reserved for the *moralitas* (*Robert Henryson*, p. 107). Richard Bauman agrees in substance with this position and contrasts Lydgate's habit of interweaving the moral with Henryson's saving it for the end: "The Folktale and Oral Tradition in the Fables of Robert Henryson," *Fabula*, 6 (1963), 116-17. But he goes too far, I think, in claiming that story and moral are separated so as not to "interfere with the entertainment" --an element cited as evidence for the "oral connections" of the *Fabillis*. Considering the literary fable tradition, the simple truth is that Lydgate was writing bad fables and that

Henryson, by properly holding off his most conspicuous flourishes until the *moralitas* and by allowing the story to do its own work, was writing good ones.

³⁹ Among them, Denton Fox, "Henryson's *Fables*," *Journal of English Literary History*, 29 (1962), 337-56; Harold E. Toliver, "Robert Henryson: From *Moralitas* to Irony," *English Studies*, 46 (1965), 300-09; Daniel M. Murtaugh, "Henryson's Animals," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 14 (1972), 405-21; Jamieson, "Henryson's Poetics," and, especially with regard to the comparison with Lydgate, "The Beast Tale in Middle Scots: Some Thoughts on the History of a Genre," *Parergon*, no. 2 (1972), 26-36.